

'PfizerKline' is just a speculation: GSK

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GSK today held its groundbreaking ceremony for its upcoming new manufacturing pharma facility near Bangalore, in Kolar, with an investment of Rs 1000 crore (£100 million).

For this, the Government of Karnataka has allotted 50 acres of Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) land at Vemgal Industrial Area located in Kolar, 50km to the east of Bangalore.

It is expected to manufacture 8 billion tablets and 1 billion capsules relating to gastroenterology and anti-inflammatory medicines primarily for the Indian market.

The first production batches will begin by the end of 2016.

Initially the facility will supply solid dose formulation products.

The factory will employ 300 professionals, and Mr James Hogg, who is the Indian head of the GSK pharma factory, will also be in-charge of the project.

The facility will be GSK's first Greenfield pharmaceutical site across the globe in the last 10 years.

According to GSK's media release, the plant will use over half a megawatt of solar generated power with all waste water being recycled.

The foundation stone at the site was laid by Hon'ble CM of Karnataka, Shri Siddaramaiah along with Lord Francis Maude, Hon'ble UK minister of State for Trade and Industry.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Annaswamy Vaidheesh, VP, South Asia & MD, India, commented that the facility will further expand as opportunities arise.

"We have our project schedule with various aspects to it. The first construction will begin next month, and we are in the process of getting the experts. This is also a part of our long-term commitment to India. This facility is meant for the Indian market. Later, as we move forward, products from this plant will be supplied to other markets. The Karnataka's CM has assured us of all the necessary infrastructure."

Mr Vaidheesh took up his new role with GSK in June 2015.

According to GSK, the city of Bangalore was selected because of its recognized status as a pharma and biotech hub, availability of skilled staff, moderate climate, easy accessibility and the support from the Government of Karnataka.

Companies from Japan, Taiwan, German and French have shown big interest in investing in Karnataka, revealed Shri Siddaramaiah.

Lord Francis said that this investment will help attract other pharma companies to invest in Karnataka.

"In the last 50 years, British companies have invested more in India than in any other G20 nations. Britain responded to Indian PM's 'Make in India' initiative by launching great collaboration in January this year. These collaborations are of mutual benefit across a range of sectors enabling success for both the parties," he said.

Indian Life Sciences companies like Dr Reddy's, Strides Arcolab, Cipla, and Strand Life Sciences have strong presence in the UK.

GSK so far has 84 manufacturing sites in 36 countries and employs 98,000 professionals in 100 countries with more than a third from the emerging markets.

Talking about the competition between MNC companies versus local players in the Indian market, Mr Vaidheesh pointed, "There is definitely a big market for MNC brands in India because local brands have their specific segments which they occupy. We are not much worried about the local players. We believe in knowledge transfer. We have other strategies to work alongside local players. We are committed to growing rapidly as fast as other MNC pharma companies and be with the market, or beat the market."

When asked about the possibility of [GSK merging with Pfizer \(PfizerKline\)](#), Mr Vaidheesh added, "Rumors continue to happen because the companies are large pharmas. GSK is a big organization and it has well-articulated future plans with respect to pharma and consumer segments. This is just a speculation."